

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	EAS.901
Historic Name:	Eastham Windmill
Common Name:	
Address:	2515 State Hwy
City/Town:	Eastham
Village/Neighborhood:	Eastham Center
Local No:	4-24
Year Constructed:	
Architect(s):	Paine, Thomas
Architectural Style(s):	
Use(s):	Abandoned or Vacant; Grist Mill; Undetermined
Significance:	Agriculture; Engineering; Industry
Area(s):	EAS.B: Eastham Center Historic District
Designation(s):	Nat'l Register District (5/12/1999)
Building Materials(s):	



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

This file was accessed on:

Friday, May 15, 2015 at 4:29: PM

FORM F - STRUCTURE

NR000 571219 P1 EAST

EAS.901

Assessor's
Number

USGS Quad

Area(s)

Form Number

4/24

Orleans

B

901

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Town

Eastham

(neighborhood or village)

2515 State Highway

Eastham Windmill

Ship: ☒ Public ☐ Private

of Structure (check one)

bridge ☐ powderhouse
anal ☐ carousel
am ☐ boat or ship
ort ☐ street
ate ☐ tower
ln ☐ wall
ighthouse ☒ windmill
ound ☐ tunnel
ther (specify)

of Construction Undetermined

Variously late 17th and late 18th century.

Source See Bibliography*

Architect, Engineer or Designer
Thomas Paine

Material(s) Frame

Alterations (with dates)
See Design Assessment.

Condition Good

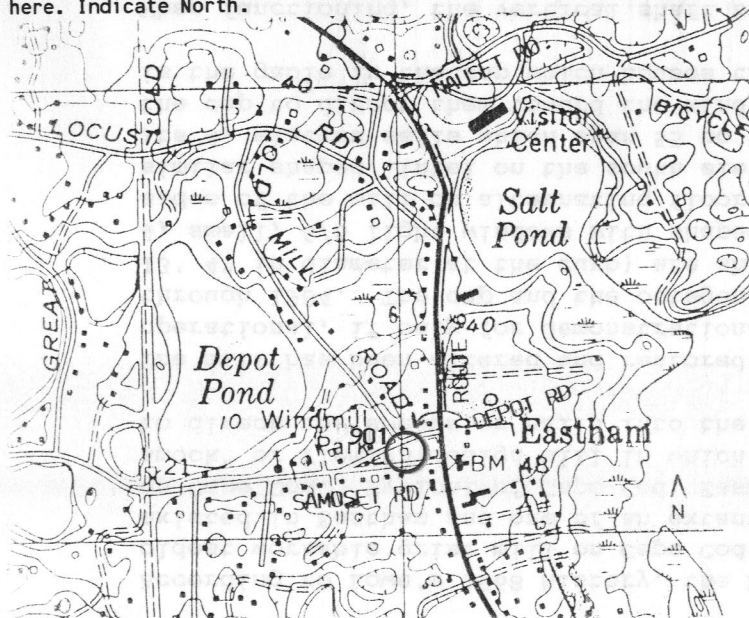
Moved ☒ no ☐ yes Date

Acreage 1.6 Acres

Setting The windmill is located in a triangular park opposite Town Hall in a densely-settled, mixed-use, section of Route 6, the major, Cape Cod, inter-community thoroughfare, the former county road and a continuation of the original Old King's Highway.



here. Indicate North.



Recorded by: Dianne L. Siergiej

Organization: Commonwealth Collaborative

Date: June 1995

RECEIVED

SEP 20 1995

MASS. HIST. COMM.

STRUCTURE FORM

Eastham Windmill
2515 State HighwayDESIGN ASSESSMENT X See continuation sheet.

Describe important design features and evaluate in terms of other structures within the community.

According to Lowe's 1968 history, the Eastham windmill was considered the oldest workable grist mill on Cape Cod. It is the last of two windmills that existed in Eastham and one of an extant handful of the many that once operated on Cape Cod. Typical of Cape Cod, Eastham's mill is an octagonal, "hat and smock" or Flemish design mill in which the revolving top or hat can be rotated to direct the sweeps or sails into the wind.

The mill has been altered and restored several times. In modern times it was operational, if only for demonstrational purposes, from the 1930's at least through 1984. The cap and the octagonal tower (20' in diameter at the base; 13' 4" in diameter at the curb) are shingled. To illuminate the interior, 4, small, 6/6 light windows with shaped lintels are located on alternating sides of the mill on alternating floors. A board and batten entry with similar shaped lintel on the south elevation allows access. The mill retains its 4, slatted sails which span 55 to 60 feet, but the tail pole which moved the cap to direct them toward the wind has been removed. An unusual feature is the gable in the cap which houses the cast-iron neck bearing.

When functioning, the vertical shaft turns a 1.5 ton millstone capable of grinding 400 pounds of corn in an hour. The granite stones are 4'10" in diameter and 6" thick. The main shafts and principle timbers have been described as hewn white oak and side boards as native pine. A newspaper article in The Cape Codder May 3, 1951 quotes then miller, Harold R. Cole, as suggesting the extra notches in the timbers indicated the mill had been originally constructed of used lumber, but such also seems a possibility any time the structure was in need of repair.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE X See continuation sheet.

Explain the history of the structure, and how it relates to the development of the community.

The history of this mill remains unresolved. A title search is necessary to provide additional information. Existing secondary sources appear to have variously repeated local tradition or provide conflicting information. Discussions as to the mill's age as it relates to the design of the structure have been the subject of debate.

Water power was not as prevalent on the Cape as it was elsewhere in New England. Where streams to power mills were available, the easier to construct water mills were utilized. Wind power provided an alternative, but the art of the millwright was considered second only to that of the shipwright and few were available. As a result, it was easier to find an old mill and move it than to find someone who could build a new one in less than a year.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES X See continuation sheet.X Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places;

If checked, see attached National Register Criteria Statement form.

DESIGN ASSESSMENT (continued)

James E. Owens who served as a demonstration miller and researched the property confirmed in published interviews that many changes and modifications had been made to the machinery, but believed the pinion and vertical shaft pre-date 1790. He also indicated that at some time about 5 feet had been removed from the bottom of the building and new sills had been added.

At least one other windmill is known to have existed in Eastham. Located in North Eastham, it was demolished c. 1865. A eighteenth-century, tide water mill (not extant), perhaps also built by Thomas Paine, was located in southern Eastham, south of the inlet to Stage or Nauset Harbor.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE (continued)

In Löwe's 1968 history, the Eastham windmill is reputed to have been built in 1793 in Plymouth, dismantled and rafted across the bay to Truro to be disassembled and moved again by ox cart to Eastham c. 1797. Other sources which relate a similar origin quote different dates for its relocation.

Contrary to Lowe, subsequent research on the Eastham windmill, reported without citation in an article in the Sunday Cape Cod Times, indicates the Eastham mill is of seventeenth century construction and attributes it to Thomas Paine, Sr., a millwright who came to Eastham from Maidstone, Kent, England, and who built several mills in the towns between Barnstable and Truro. According to the article in the Cape Cod Times, records show the Town of Eastham granted 26 acres of upland to Paine in 1684 because he had been building 2 grist mills for the use of the town.

Kittredge in Cape Cod: Its People and Their History emphasizes both the importance and scarce availability of mills and millwrights to early settlers and the common practice of relocating windmills. Kittredge estimates half the windmills on the Cape were relocated from their original sites. Kittredge also credits Thomas Paine of Eastham as being the most celebrated early millwright on Cape Cod and notes he erected two windmills in Eastham in 1683 and 1684. Deyo's county history relates a relocation story for the Eastham windmill. He indicates it was built in 1776 in Provincetown and moved to Eastham c. 1795.

Reference to local maps further confound the information, the Rogers, Knowles and Kingman's 1795 Map of Eastham shows a windmill located east of the County Road at Salt Pond and another south of Town Cove (extant, now part of Orleans). Wales 1831 Plan of Eastham locates a windmill on the west side of Nauset Road north of the schoolhouse, and confirms the windmill at this site.

Ownership of the mill is also undocumented. Deyo (1890) lists the owners of the Eastham mill as Thomas Paine and Seth Knowles, but does not specify a time frame. James E. Owens, who served for demonstration purposes as assistant miller between 1974 and 1979 and miller from 1980 and 1984 reputedly researched the property. He stated in separate articles published in the Cape Codder on December 4, 1979 and August 17, 1980 that the windmill had been

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE (continued)

located next to Salt Pond, but was moved to this site when "a man named Knowles sold the Salt Pond Hill tract in 1808." Jeremiah Digges in Cape Cod Pilot attributes the mill to Seth Knowles.

Details in the information above, however, leave it subject to question. Seth Knowles purchased a farm in 1742 on Fort Hill, not near Salt Pond where the mill was presumably previously located. His great, great grandson (b. 1822), also Seth Knowles, was a farmer on the same homestead. The latter could have owned the mill in the late nineteenth century. A deed on file at the Eastham Historical Society Archives, however, records the sale in 1882 of the windmill in the center from Joshua Cole of Eastham to Charles H. Smith of Eastham.

Deyo's reference to Thomas Paine likely alludes to the millwright. Thomas K. Paine (b. 1833), however, was the last full-time miller. He took the job after retiring on June 30, 1884 as keeper of Billingsgate Light on Billingsgate Island (not extant). A HABS survey of the Eastham windmill completed in 1935 provides photographs and line drawings (see attached), but no historical documentation.

Whatever its origins and previous history, by the late nineteenth century, the mill was infrequently used. In 1895, the women of the Village Improvement Society began to raise money to save the mill. They purchased it and two adjoining lots of land in 1904 for \$113.50 from James E. Steele. The mill became a visitor's attraction beginning at the turn of the century when post cards of the mill became available. The society maintained the structure and employed a part time miller until 1928 when the mill was offered for sale to

Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Archives Building
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Community: Eastham
Property Address: 2515 State Highway
Eastham Windmill

EAS.901

Area B Form No. 901

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement

Check all that apply:

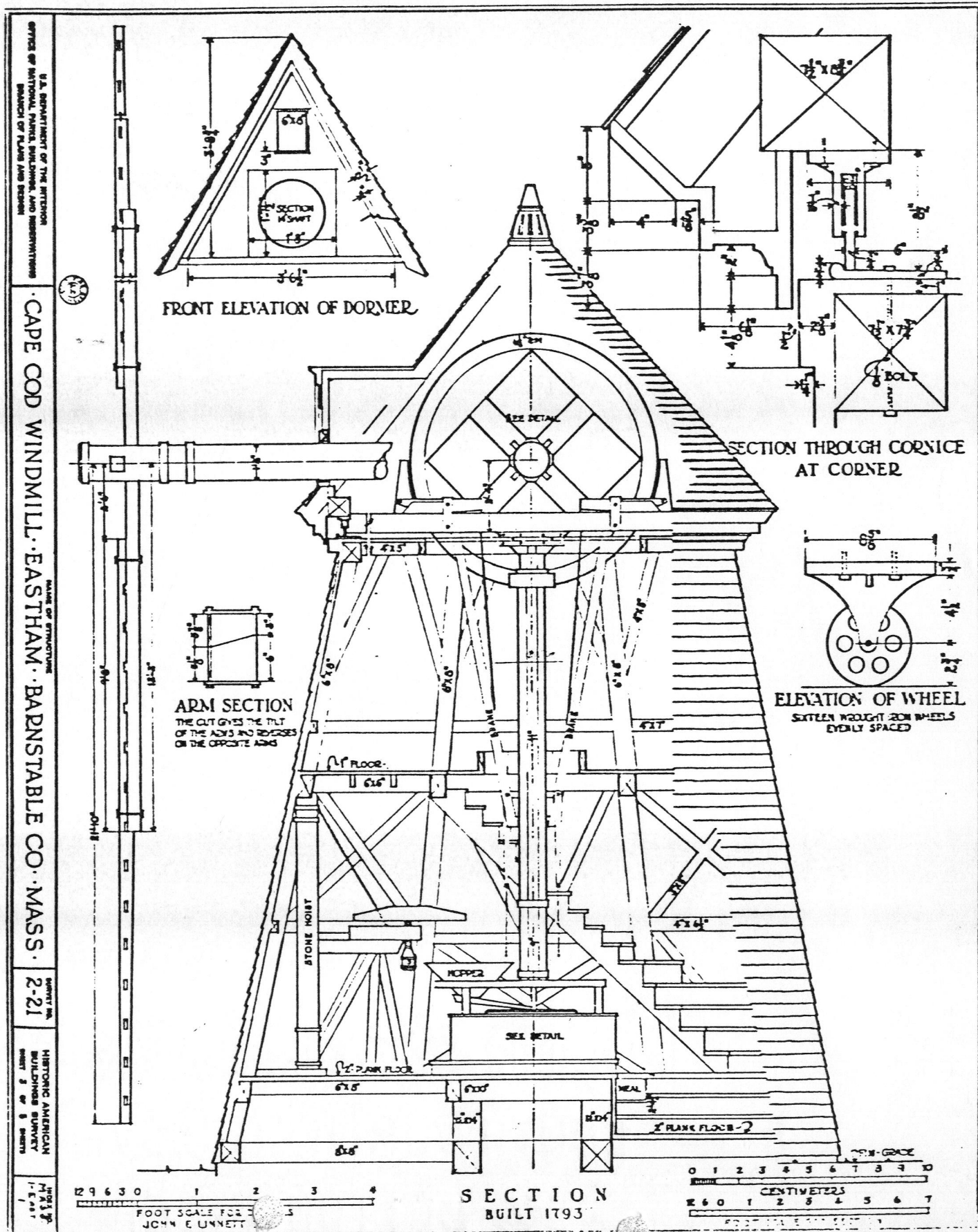
☒ Individually eligible ☐ Eligible only in a historic district
☐ Contributing to a ☐ Potential historic district
potential historic district

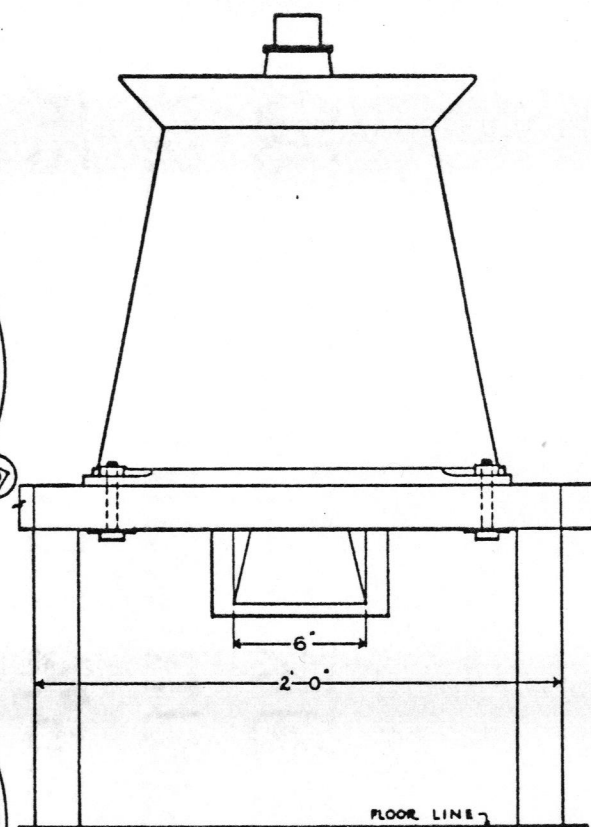
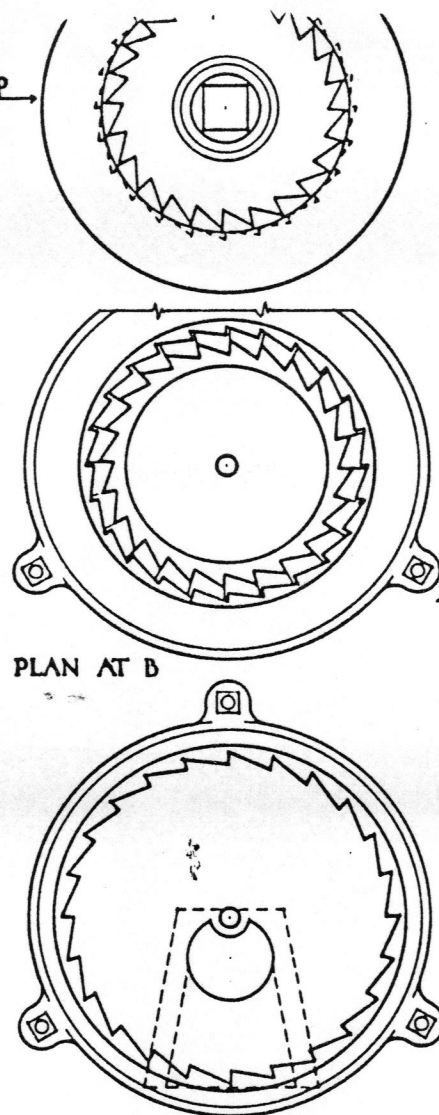
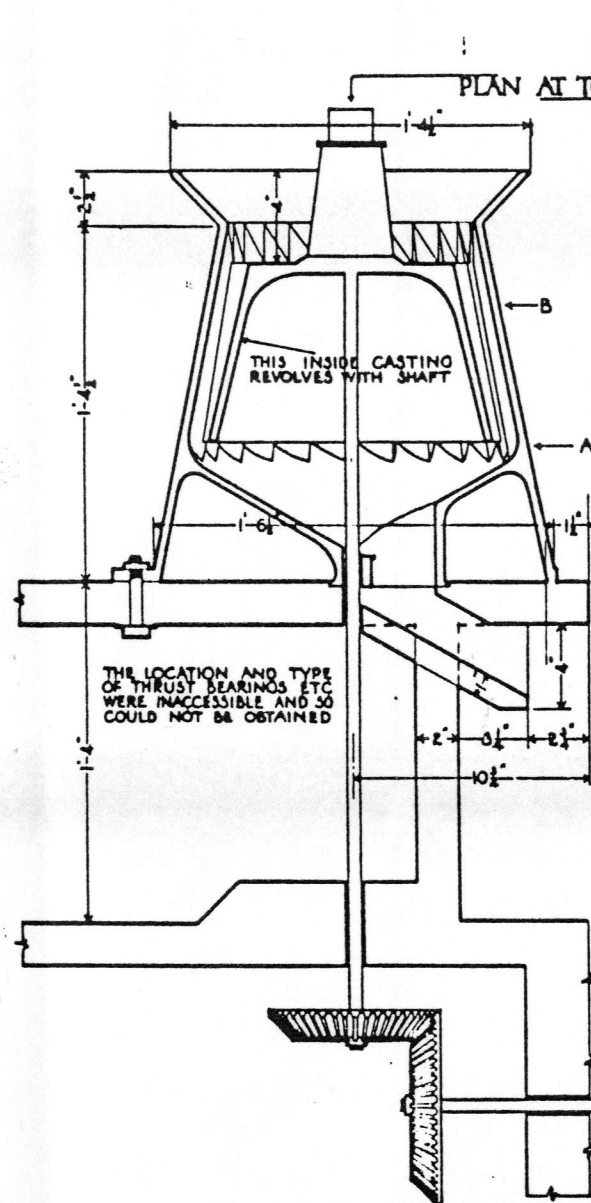
Criteria: ☒ A ☒ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations: ☐ A ☒ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

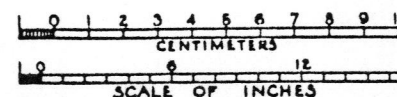
Statement of Significance by: Dianne L. Siergiej
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

The Eastham windmill on State Highway is significant on the local and perhaps the state level with regard to the above-referenced criteria and the designated consideration as one of the few and the oldest surviving windmills on Cape Cod which were one fairly common in a regional lacking in other forms of natural motive power that could be harnessed. It is also significant for its likely association with the most celebrated early millwright on Cape Cod, Thomas Paine of Eastham. Although the windmill may have been moved, relocation was historically characteristic of such structures during their useful life.





PRESENT APPLICATION OF POWER TO COB-BREAKER THROUGH DEVEL GEARS CONNECTING WITH MAIN SHAFT BELOW STONES IS NEW. NO RECORD EXISTS OF ORIGINAL METHOD OF APPLYING POWER TO THIS MACHINE.



BUILT 1793

HENRY ORANGE OLIDDEN DEL



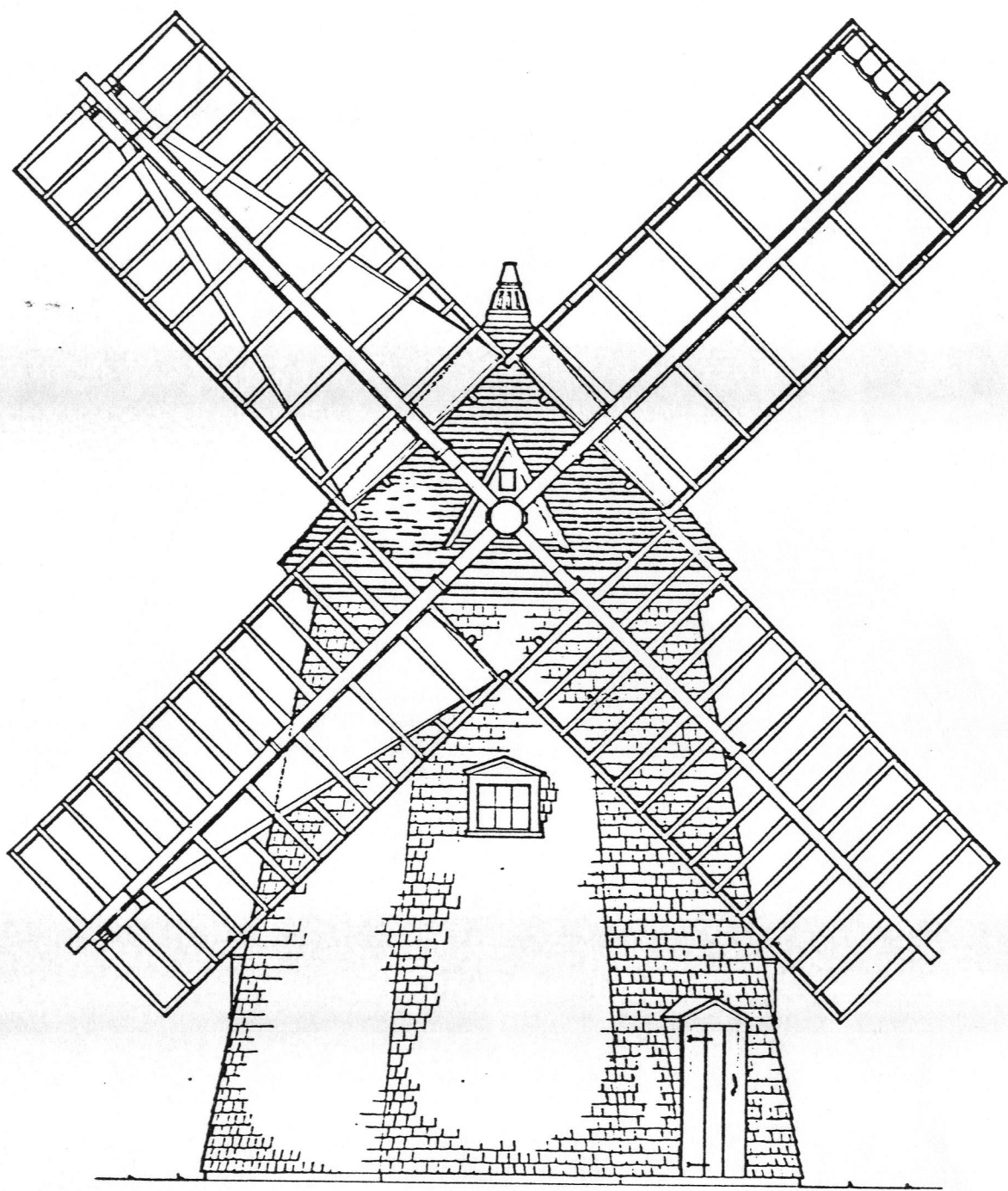
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

NAME OF STRUCTURE
CAPE COD WINDMILL · EASTHAM · BARNSTABLE CO · MASS ·

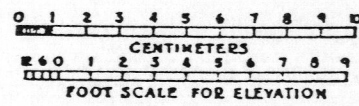
SURVEY NO.
2-21

HISTORIC AMERICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 5 OF 5 SHEETS

INDEX NO.
MASS.
1-5117
1



SOUTH ELEVATION



BUILT 1793

JOHN E. LINNETT JR.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL, PUBLIC, BUILDINGS, AND RECREATION
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

CAPE COD WINDMILL · EASTHAM · BARNSTABLE CO · MASS.

2-21

HISTORIC AMERICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 2 OF 2 NORTH

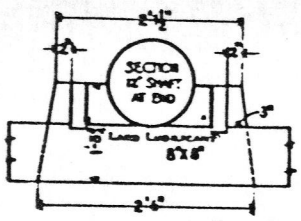
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

CAPE COD WINDMILL · EASTHAM · BARNSTABLE CO. MASS.

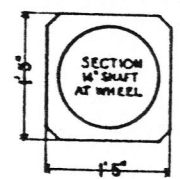
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HISTORIC AMERICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 1 OF 3 SHEETS

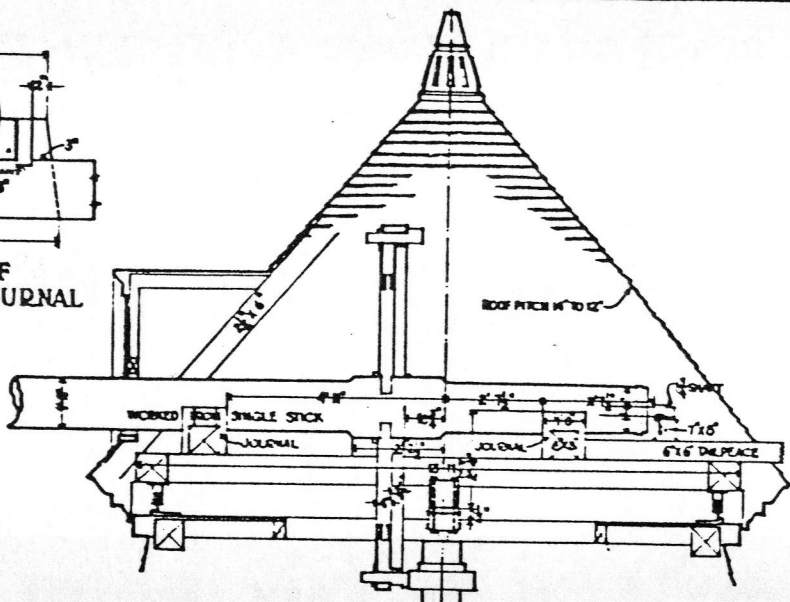
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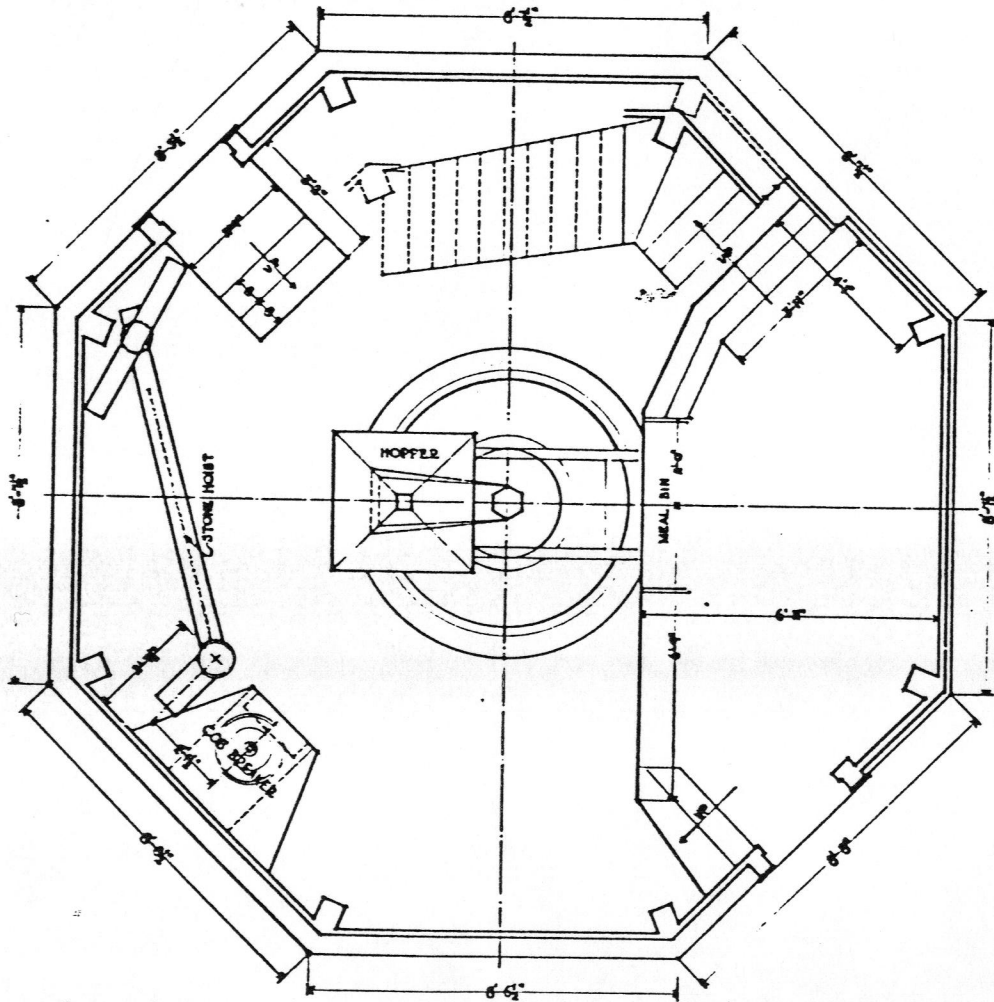
DETAIL OF
WOODEN JOURNAL



DETAIL OF SHAFT



CROSS SECTION THROUGH TOP

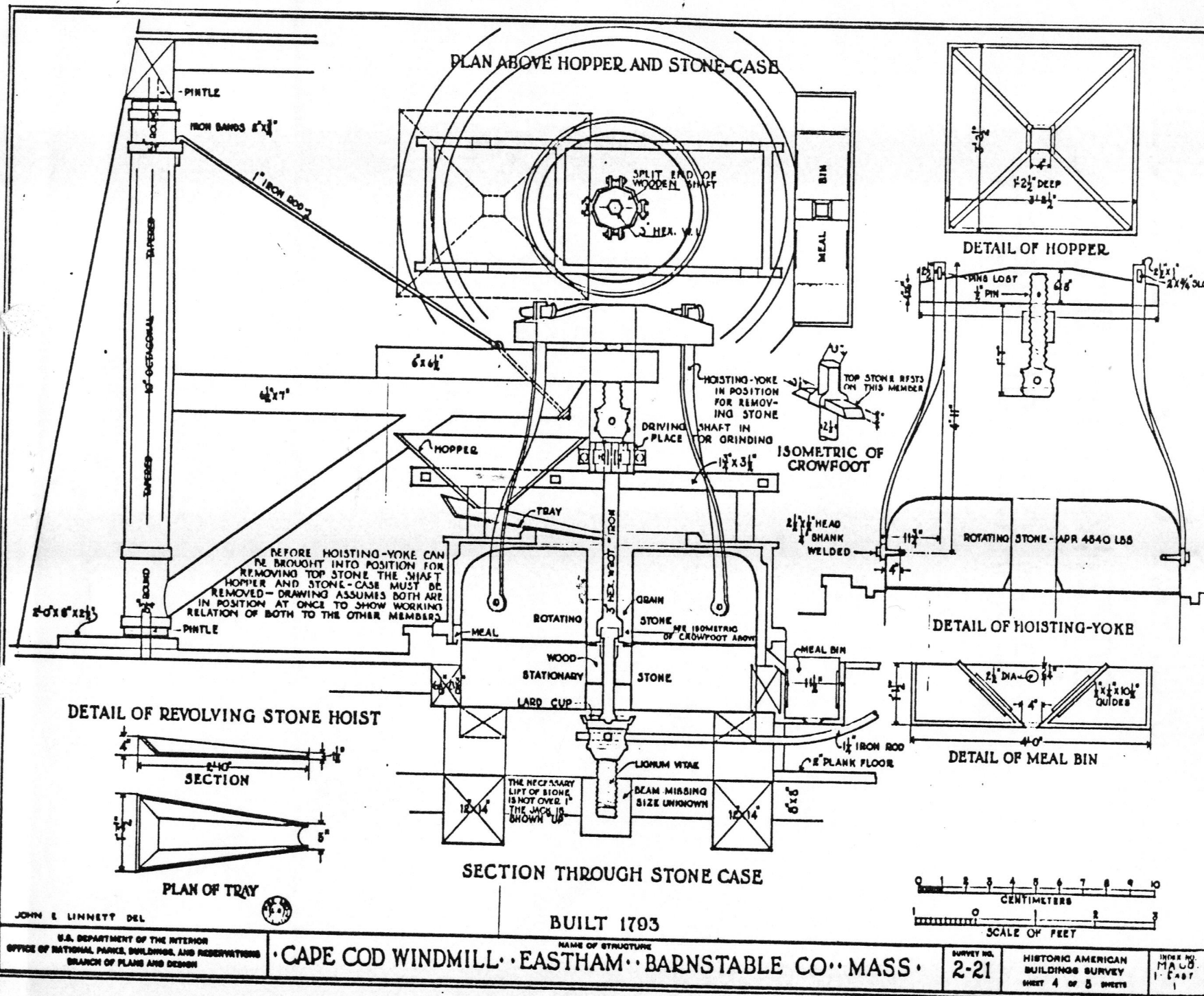


FIRST FLOOR PLAN
BUILT 1793

0 1 2 3
FOOT SCALE FOR DETAILS

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
CENTIMETERS
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
FOOT SCALE FOR PLAN

JOHN E. LINNETT DEL.



Original yellow form: Eligibility file _____
Copies: Inventory form ☒ _____
Town file(w/corresp.) _____
Macris _____
NR director _____

EAS.901

Community: Eastham

MHC OPINION: ELIGIBILITY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER

Date Received: 10/16/95

Date Due:

Date Reviewed: 11/29/95

Type: ☒ Individual

☐ District (Attach map indicating boundaries)

Name: Eastham Windmill

Inventory Form: EAS.901

Address: 2515 State Highway

Requested by: Eastham Historical Commission

Action: ☒ Honor ☐ ITC ☐ Grant ☐ R & C ☐ Other:

Agency:

Staff in charge of Review: HK

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

☒ Eligible
☒ Eligible, also in district
☐ Eligible only in district
☐ Ineligible
☐ More information needed

DISTRICTS

☐ Eligible
☐ Ineligible
☐ More information needed

CRITERIA: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

LEVEL: ☒ Local ☐ State ☐ National

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE by Heather Knouse

Although the exact date of construction for the Eastham Windmill, 2515 State Highway, is unknown, this structure is most likely one of the oldest windmills still extant on Cape Cod. Designed in the "hat and smock" or Flemish style, the Eastham Windmill is a rare example of a once common architectural style of Cape Cod windmill. Because moving a windmill was often an easier task than building a new one, the construction data for the windmill, such as date and architect, are difficult to ascertain. Local historians contend that Thomas Paine, a noted early millwright and resident of Eastham, most likely built the Eastham Windmill in the late eighteenth century. In 1895, the women of the Village Improvement Society raised money to purchase the windmill and two adjoining properties from private ownership for \$113.50. Around the turn of the twentieth century, the windmill became a local tourist attraction and the subject of postcards and souvenirs. Since the 1930s, the windmill has undergone many alterations, including the shingling of the cap and tower, the addition of six-over-six windows on alternating sides on alternating floors, and the introduction of a pedestrian entry on the south elevation. The windmill is eligible for listing under Criterion A, because of its association with Thomas Paine, the Village Improvement Society, and the nineteenth century gristmilling industry in Eastham. Additionally, the windmill is eligible under Criterion C as a representative example of the "hat and smock" style of windmill construction.

The Eastham Windmill is also eligible for National Register listing as a contributing resource in a potential Eastham Center historic district.